



Congressman
BENNIE THOMPSON
 REPRESENTING THE SECOND DISTRICT OF MISSISSIPPI



The Thompson Report

Keep it Simple for Seniors (KISS)

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MISSISSIPPI

AGRICULTURE
BLUES
HISTORY



Keep it Simple for Seniors (KISS)

Starting January 1, 2006, Medicare will offer prescription drug coverage through new private drug plans, and Medicaid will no longer cover drug costs for persons eligible for both Medicare and Medicaid. Instead, Medicare beneficiaries will be able to purchase drug coverage using federal subsidies for the bulk of the cost. However, there will be substantial drug costs.

The new Medicare Part D prescription drug provisions are complex, and there are still questions about how the benefit in this new program works. Major issues for the low-income popula-

tion include identification of those eligible for subsidies, assisting them in selecting and enrolling in a Part D plan, timely enrollment, and access of enrollees to needed therapies. The low-income provisions also raise administrative

"...drug benefit is inadequate, overly complex and was set up to maximize profits for the pharmaceutical and HMO..."

and financial concerns for state Medicaid programs. I opposed the law that created this program because the drug benefit is inadequate, overly complex and was set up to maximize profits for the pharmaceutical and HMO companies rather than maximizing help to Medicare beneficiaries.

Therefore, people need to be
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In Memory of Our Civil Rights Heroines

Recently, we suffered the loss of three of our civil rights heroines, Constance B. Motley, C. Delores Tucker and Rosa L. Parks. Through



Constance B. Motley
 Picture courtesy of
 Just The Beginning
 Foundation

their accomplishments, these pioneers have defined our country's culture, laws, and politics. Constance Baker Motley, Esq.: Civil Rights pioneer Constance Motley was born on September 14, 1921,

in New Haven, Connecticut. Motley attended Fisk University in Tennessee but later transferred to New York University's Washington Square College. She went to law school at Columbia University and was the only woman attorney who argued in the Brown v.

Board of Education case. She successfully argued for James Meredith's enrollment at the University of Mississippi. She was the first black woman appointed to the federal bench, as well as the first one elected to the New York State Senate.

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Serving: Attala, Bolivar, Carroll, Claiborne, Coahoma, Copiah, Hinds, Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Jefferson, Leake, Leflore, Madison, Montgomery, Quitman, Sharkey, Sunflower, Tallahatchie, Tunica, Warren, Washington, Yazoo

Small but Equal

"In some cases size is not number one, the ability to get the job done is!" Small and minority owned businesses must be given an equal opportunity to bid, qualify, and be awarded contracts on rebuilding parts of Mississippi and other states left devastated by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita and Wilma. The bigger companies are reigning over the smaller ones using their high-powered connections. As quiet as it may be kept, local contractors should have preference. But as we have seen that has not been the case.

To ensure that such practices do not continue,

"In some cases size is not number one, the ability to get the job done is!"

those of us in the Federal government working on behalf of disadvantaged business must speak out

for them and require that big firms consider the smaller businesses. After all, they need work too – right? Small businesses are those with average annual gross receipts of less than \$30 million over the past three years. For small disadvantaged businesses there are criteria which must be met in order to be eligible for Federal contracts such as 8(a) certification and HUBZone. Federal procurement regulations mandate that the Small Business Administration certifies all small disadvantaged businesses wishing to bid for Federal contracts. It was also intended to cultivate fair practices and combat any window of opportunity for discrimination.

Ever since Hurricane

Katrina hit, my office has consistently received faxes and phone calls from Mississippi business owners wanting to help rebuild homes, city infrastructure, and simply help in any way they can. However, some have never dealt with Federal contracts for many



reasons both good and bad – but mainly due to lack of knowledge about how to obtain a government contract. Therefore it was befitting to host the "Procurement Opportunities and Networking Workshop." The workshop brought folks to the local small and disadvantaged business owners who could tell them how to get themselves ready for the tryouts and be prepared to play ball. We heard information on the overview of the Federal and State of Mississippi Procurement Proc-

esses, Business Opportunities with Disaster Recovery Prime Contractors and Networking with Federal Agencies and Prime Contractors to say the least.

For those small business that are still in need of assistance, please contact the nearest Small Business Administration. If you feel you have been wrongly denied of a FEMA contract, file a bid protest with the Government Accountability Office (GAO) or you may visit them on the web at <http://www.gao.gov/>. You may also contact the FEMA Federal Coordinating Office/Joint Field Office in Jackson, Mississippi, at 601-965-2200.

For more information, please contact Brenda Funches in my Jackson office at 601-946-9003. For more information, please contact Juliet Thomas in my Greenville office at 662-335-9003.

Visit Congressman Thompson on the Web at www.house.gov/thompson.

In Memory of Our Civil Rights Heroines



Dr. C Delores Tucker
Picture courtesy of
National Congress of
Black Women

Dr. C. Delores Tucker: Early on, her civil activities included participating in the 1965 march on Selma, Alabama alongside the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and raising funds for the NAACP. She spent much of the last few years of her life attempting to rid recorded music of sexually explicit lyrics, citing a concern that the lyrics were misogynistic and threatened the moral foundation of the African American community.

Rosa L. Parks: Mrs. Parks was a civil rights activist and seamstress

whom the U.S. Congress dubbed the "mother of the modern-day Civil Rights Movement." Parks is famous for her 1955 refusal to obey a bus driver's demand that she give up her seat to a white passenger. Her subsequent arrest and trial for this act of civil disobedience ignited the Montgomery Bus Boycott, one of the largest and most successful mass movements against racial segregation in history. She is the first African American woman to lie in honor in



Rosa L. Parks
Picture courtesy of
Academy of Achievement

the United States Capitol Rotunda. Most recently, she became the first African American woman to have legislation signed into law authorizing a statue in her likeness to be placed in the United States Congress' Statuary Hall.

I am honored to recognize their outstanding accomplishments as their legacies lives on in American culture and history.

For more information, please contact Zahra Buck in my Washington, D.C. Office at 1-202-225-5876.

"...these pioneers have defined our country's culture, laws, and politics."

Keep it Simple for Seniors (KISS)

armed with the information necessary to make the best decision about whether to join and, if so, which plan may best meet their needs.

Whether you are a senior, a person with a disability or someone trying to help a parent or friend, I encourage you to carefully research the available options BEFORE making a choice. Most people have until May 15th, 2006 to sign up for a plan before late enrollment penalties apply, so take your time, check your facts and know your options. Below is a list of important dates, useful phone numbers and websites to assist in researching the Medicare drug plans.



December 31, 2005 – The last day to enroll to have coverage that begins on January 1, 2006.

May 15, 2006 – The last day to enroll in a Medicare drug plan without incurring a 1% per month premium surcharge and last day to enroll to receive any benefits in 2006.

November 15, 2006 -- The open enrollment period for Medicare Drug Benefit (Part D) begins for 2007. This is also the first opportunity for those who enrolled in a Medicare

drug plan for 2006 to switch plans if they wish.

If you need assistance or have question you may contact:

Medicare: 1-800-Medicare or www.medicare.gov.

Local office on aging: 1-800-948-3090 or www.eldercare.gov.

Social Security: 1-800-772-1213 or www.ssa.gov/prescriptionhelp. Carolyn A. Sampson at the MS Insurance Counseling and Assistance Program (MICAP) 1-800-948-3090.

For more information, contact Karis Gutter in my Washington, D.C. office at 1-202-225-5876.

Revitalizing Homestead for the Evacuees

It has now been approximately three months since Katrina and Rita hit the southern parts of the United States. We still

"...help hurricane victims re-gain some sense of the American citizenship by reviving the 'Homestead Act.'"

have thousands of people displaced in "temporary housing arrangements." But I want to assure our constituents that we, the Members of Congress have not forgotten them. One of our responsibilities is to not only make laws but to spend the people's money wisely. Therefore Congressman Bobby Jindal (R-LA) and I have introduced legislation to help hurricane victims re-gain some sense of the American citizenship by reviving the "Homestead Act."

The Homestead Act (1862-1986) gave millions of Americans the dream of owning a piece of land

owned by the US Government. However, under the legislation we have introduced it will provide certain families who have lost their homes as a result of the hurricanes with the opportunity to take over single family properties owned by the federal government. Just like Congressman Jindal said when we began talks about re-writing and introducing this legislation, "This is an effort to help those families get back into houses and to help them turn those houses into homes."

This bill will help us be great managers of the people's money and assets. Because we have HUD (Housing and Urban Development) homes and properties donated by other non-governmental agencies for the victims. These people are just like any American citizen and they need help to put their lives back together. Of course, there will be eligibility requirements to en-

sure that the law is enforced fairly and everyone has an equal chance at home ownership. For example, disaster families who earn less than 80 percent of the median income for the area would meet



US Map of Homestead States
Source: Homestead National Monument of America

one of the requirements. Those families awarded under this legislation will agree to remain in the property for five years, and to repair the property so that it meets health and safety regulations and local codes within three years. The Federal Government has property all

across the US. Over 30 states in the US are Homestead states.

HUD Secretary Alphonso Jackson said, "This initiative will provide dislocated families the opportunities to own a stake in their community, planting the seeds of new and vital neighborhoods that will be rooted in the American Dream." This legislation also complements HUD's announcement that it will assist disaster victims in paying their mortgage for one year in order to keep families in homes. So, with the support of other federal agencies such as HUD, I am confident that we can continue helping meet the needs of disaster victims today and in the future.

For more information, please contact Karis Gutter in my Washington, D.C. office at 1-202-225-5876.

United States Representative Bennie G. Thompson
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Email: benniethompson@mail.house.gov



~HURRICANE KATRINA FEDERAL AND STATE EFFORTS ~
 (Mississippi)

- ◆ There are seven open shelters (including cruise ship) housing 1,275 individuals.
- ◆ The SBA has approved 4,569 home loans, 384 business loans and 142 economic injury loans, totaling \$376,877,900.
- ◆ Housing inspections completed total 348,648.

Source: FEMA



Happy Holidays



Happy Holidays to everyone in Mississippi's Second Congressional District and to our extended family in other states. I would also like to express greetings to all of the Evacuees still in Mississippi and may everyone have safe and blessed holidays.

Bennie G. Thompson
 Member of Congress

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 (601) 866-9003
 (601) 866-9036 (Fax)
 (800) 355-9003 (In State)

Greenville

★ 910 Courthouse Lane
 Greenville, Mississippi 38701
 (662) 335-9003
 (662) 334-1304 (Fax)

Greenwood

★ 509 Highway 82 West
 Greenwood, Mississippi 38930
 (662) 455-9003
 (662) 453-0118 (Fax)

Marks

★ Quitman County Court House
 263 East Main Street
 PO Box 356
 Marks, Mississippi 38646
 (662) 326-9003

Mound Bayou

★ Mound Bayou City Hall
 Room 134
 106 West Green Street
 Mound Bayou, Mississippi 38762
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★ 3607 Medgar Evers Blvd
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